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PATENT

## IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Inventor(s): STEPHEN D. KUSLICH et al.

Appl. No.: 10/627,589

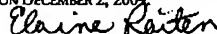
Filing Date: July 25, 2003

Title: LAPAROSCOPIC SPINAL  
STABILIZATION  
SURGICAL METHOD

Examiner: [REDACTED]

Group Art Unit: 3732

Docket No. 75028-307894

Mail Stop Amendment  
Commissioner for Patents  
P. O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450I CERTIFY THAT THIS CORRESPONDENCE IS BEING FACSIMILE  
TRANSMITTED TO THE U.S. PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE (FAX  
No. (703) 872-9306), ON DECEMBER 2, 2004.  
Elaine Raiten**REPLY**

This Reply is responsive to the outstanding Office Action mailed June 3, 2004. A petition for a three-month time extension with appropriate fee is filed herewith. No additional fee is thought to be necessary. However, if any fee is required for entry of this paper, the Commissioner is authorized to charge our Deposit Account 06-0029 and is requested to notify us of the same. This Reply includes the following:

- **Amendments to the Claims** as reflected in the listing of claims beginning on page 2 of this paper.
- **Remarks** beginning on page 9 of this paper.